

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 008799

SIPDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY; U/S BURNS
USUN FOR JOHN BOLTON
IO FOR A/S KRISTEN SILVERBURG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/18/2015
TAGS: PREL KDEM PHUM IN UNSC GOI
SUBJECT: INDIA'S NAM BAGGAGE STILL HOLDING IT BACK ON UN
REFORM

Classified By: PolCouns Geoff Pyatt, for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

¶11. (C) Summary: At a November 17 meeting with Senior Advisor on UN Reform Ambassador Tahir-Kheli, Deputy National Security Advisor Nambiar insisted that India's "stereotype as a representative of developing countries" at the United Nations will hinder its ability to play a leading role with the US on UN reform. Even as India "moves away" from its association with the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and tries to soften the group's statements, they are still "bound by these historic compulsions," Nambiar countered, and will have to move with the general consensus. Ambassador Tahir-Kheli stressed that India has already made many of the tough decisions at the UN to move away from NAM positions, and pointed out that several NAM countries are on board with the reform movement. She urged the GOI to speak up on areas of UN reform where it does agree, rather than being dragged along with a consensus that does not match the interests of either India or the US. End Summary.

SCARED TO JOIN THE BIG BOYS?

¶12. (C) Deputy National Security Advisor Ambassador Vijay Nambiar told Senior Advisor on UN reform Ambassador Tahir-Kheli at a meeting at New Delhi's United Services Institute on November 17 that India may not take the lead on advocating for UN reform because it is constrained by its traditional role as a representative of developing countries in the NAM. Nambiar, who served as India's Permanent Representative to the UN, commented that India "can't be seen as part of the big boys club yet." He observed that it would be difficult for the GOI to subscribe to the American "segmented" approach to UN reform. Acknowledging that India was "moving in the direction of the US proposals," he nevertheless predicted that on specific priorities, such as the Human Rights Council, India would "move with the general collective rather than staking a leadership position."

COME ON, YOU CAN DO IT

¶13. (C) Ambassador Tahir-Kheli pointed out that it was in our joint interest to work together on areas of US-India consensus rather than leaving key decision to the NAM. She observed that India's stated case for a UNSC seat is based on its leadership role which does not mesh with Nambiar's stated inclination to defer to the NAM. India's role in the UN Democracy Fund and its IAEA vote show that the GOI has already taken the tough decision to move away from this stereotype. Comparatively, UN reform should not be controversial since a strengthened management effort and a robust Human Rights Council is in everyone's interest. Ambassador Tahir-Kheli urged India to take a visible role in advocating for reforms with the US where there was a common agenda, rather than being dragged along by the NAM consensus.

¶14. (C) Ambassador Tahir-Kheli also pointed out that the USG and GOI agree on most aspects of the Human Rights Council. She noted that certain NAM countries, including many African nations and Singapore, were supporting the Human Rights Council. A difference of opinion on country-specific condemnations should not prevent India and the US from working together, she added. Ambassador Tahir-Kheli praised India's commitment to the Democracy Fund and emphasized that human rights was the other side of the coin and an important priority for democratic nations. She urged support for management reform in areas of common consensus.

NAMBY PAMBY

¶15. (C) Comment: Although PM Singh and other top leaders do not necessarily share his thinking on India's need to move slowly away from traditional allegiances, the Deputy National Security Advisor's opinions provides insight into how some of India's bureaucrats, including PermRep Sen, feel about working with the US on UN reform. Nambiar's brother, Lt. Gen. (retd.) Satish Nambiar, served on Annan's High Level Panel on UN reform and was also present at the meeting. He was less cautious on the US reform effort, saying that he

agreed with the need for vocal Indian support on management and human rights reforms. However, General Nambiar commented that many in India and the UN are deeply suspicious of the American commitment to Security Council reform. As a result, without bankable US support for India on the UNSC, some GOI leaders, such as the Deputy NSA, may wonder whether UN reform is worth the risk of fraying India's NAM coalition and facing more domestic political flak. Nambiar added that Ambassador Tahir-Kheli's extensive public discussion of the overall reform agenda was very helpful as most Indians believed that UNSC expansion was the main reform issue.

¶ 6. (U) Ambassador Tahir-Kheli has cleared this message.

¶ 7. (U) Visit New Delhi's Classified Website:
(<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/sa/newdelhi/>)
BLAKE